

HSC Team Selection Practices for High School Teams (U16 and U18)

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When young men and women enter high school, they are exposed to far broader activities (sports, academic, artistic, social, and jobs) than previously. As a result, the number of participants in spring youth soccer drops off considerably. Also, boys and girls playing youth soccer must make a mandated either-or choice to play on a town or a MAPLE (MAssachusetts Premier LEague) team, both of which play matches on Sunday afternoons.

With a diminished number of players, the Harvard Soccer Club chooses among several possibilities when fielding its boys and girls high school age teams playing in the Under 16 and Under 18 age groupings of the Nashoba Valley Youth Soccer League. Depending on the numbers of players, the choices for each gender are:

1. Enter teams in both Under 16 and Under 18 age groups.
2. Enter only one team in either age group. If the team is an Under 18 team, capable Under 16 players may be placed on the team to fill out its numbers up to a maximum of 18.
3. Enter a joint team in an age group, combining players with a nearby town, most often Littleton.
4. Enter no teams at all.
5. Place individual players on teams in nearby towns.

The decision to enter teams is made by the boys or girls high school age group coordinator based on his or her knowledge of the playing abilities of individual players. The coordinator may also recruit players to play on a team, and advise players and their families against playing on a team, especially a Boys Under 18 team playing in an extremely physical division. Subject to numbers of players signed up and available space and time, the coordinator may choose to have a session to evaluate and try out players, with the objective of filling the maximum of 18 roster positions.

Players signed up for high school age spring soccer need to understand these possibilities, and be prepared to accept any of the options described above or receive a full refund of all fees paid to enroll in spring soccer.